

1285 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10019
Tel. 646 935-3905
Fax. 646 935-3923
www.ketchum.com



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To: Registration Unit – Counter Espionage
Section, Criminal Division **From:** Craig Mersky, Esq.

Fax: 202-514-2836 **Pages:** 13 Pages with Cover Sheet

Phone: **Date:** Thursday, August 06, 2009

Re: Ketchum Inc. (Registration #5758)

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August 6, 2009

BY FACSIMILE (202) 514-2836

Registration Unit
Counterespionage Section, Criminal Division
U.S. Department of Justice
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Re: Ketchum Inc. (Registration #5758) – Informational Materials

Dear Sir/Madam:

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Ketchum
1285 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10019
T: 646 935 3900
F: 646 935 4482
www.ketchum.com

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Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CM".

Craig Mersky
General Counsel

Timeline: Georgia-South Ossetia Conflict

Recent International Activities; Sequence of Events Leading up to the Conflict

This timeline describes the recent international efforts to establish a lasting peace in the Caucasus after the incursion of Georgian armed forces in South Ossetia, and provides the precise sequence of events leading up to the August 2008 conflict.

"The roots of this tragedy lie in the decision of Georgia's separatist leaders in 1991 to abolish South Ossetian autonomy. This turned out to be a time bomb for Georgia's territorial integrity. Each time successive Georgian leaders tried to impose their will by force... it only made the situation worse... Nevertheless, it was still possible to find a political solution. For some time, relative calm was maintained in South Ossetia. The peacekeeping force composed of Russians, Georgians and Ossetians fulfilled its mission... Through all these years, Russia has continued to recognize Georgia's territorial integrity... What happened on the night of Aug. 7 is beyond comprehension" (Mikhail Gorbachev, *The Washington Post*, 12 August 2008).

"The international community, which has largely backed Georgia's unremittingly belligerent posture (and actions) since 1992, should realise the futility of its present stance, follow Russia, and recognise Abkhazia and S. Ossetia, which is the only way that Georgia too will be forced to stop fantasising about regaining lost territories and accommodate itself to the facts on the ground. Only then will it be possible to start building a prosperous future for the region" (George Hewitt, professor of Caucasian languages, SOAS, London University, writing in the World Security Institute's Johnson's Russia List, 16 June 2009).

Following the South Ossetian Conflict*

2009:

13 July

President Medvedev makes his first trip to South Ossetia to inspect a new Russian military base and to meet with Eduard Kokoity, the South Ossetian president. During his visit, Medvedev promises South Ossetian citizens that Russia would help rebuild neighborhoods destroyed during last year's conflict.

"Russian President Dmitry Medvedev was greeted by raucous crowds cheering and chanting "Thank you!" when he visited South Ossetia in a trip showing off Russia's ties to the breakaway Georgian region" (Associated Press, 13 July 2009).

30 April

Russia, South Ossetia and Abkhazia sign agreements on cooperation in protecting the borders of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and on coordination of state security services.

"While defending the borders of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, we are of course aspiring to achieve the most important goal, the same we have always had: to ensure long-awaited peace in the region" (President Medvedev in a press statement following the signing of border cooperation agreements with Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

2008:

15 October

International discussions, as delineated in the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan begin in Geneva. These discussions focus on ways of providing security and stability to the region, the issue of refugees and displaced persons on the base of internationally recognized principles and practice post-conflict resolution, including any issue submitted with a mutual assent of the sides.

17 September

Russia signs treaties on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance with South Ossetia and Abkhazia, agreeing to open borders for business and cultural contacts. These treaties serve as a basis for future agreements on security, state border protection, counter-terrorism, customs, economy and investment.

These treaties also contain provisions to enable the countries involved to take the necessary joint measures to remove threats to peace and respond to aggressive acts. The treaties provide for this in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter proclaiming the right to individual or collective self-defence.

"The treaties signed today are a logical stage in the development of events in the region since the beginning of the 1990s and a continuation of the steps Russia has taken since 8 August this year. Russia's objective was to rein in the Georgian aggressors, restore peace and stability to the Trans-Caucasus region and create the conditions for the Abkhazian and South Ossetian peoples' free and democratic development" (President Medvedev in a press statement following the signings of treaties with Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

"This is a historic day for our small country. We realise the great responsibility we have and are doing everything we can to build a democratic and rule-of-law state in which there will be no war and where the rights and freedoms of all minority peoples will be respected. We guarantee this with our lives and our Constitution" (President of the Republic of Abkhazia Sergei Bagapsh in a press statement following the signings of treaties with Russia).

"This is a question of vital importance for the people of South Ossetia, who would have faced complete extermination were it not for Russia's intervention. We have said repeatedly that our desire to establish an independent South Ossetia recognised by the international community was dictated by the need to protect our people's right to freedom, human dignity and quite simply our right to life in the face of the constant threat from Georgia. Russia's recognition of South Ossetia as an independent state has opened a new era for us and given us the possibility of ensuring a secure future and sustainable development for current and future generations" (President of the Republic of South Ossetia Eduard Kokoity in a press statement following the signings of treaties with Russia).

8 September

French President Sarkozy confirms that the EU is ready to continue its efforts to help resolve the conflict, including establishing international mechanisms to guarantee security in the zones around South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Presidents Medvedev and Sarkozy agree on additional measures for implementing the plan of 12 August 2008, including:

1. Withdrawal of troops
2. International observations mechanisms
3. International discussions

"In the European Union we see our natural partners, our key partners, and this is why we have agreed on additional measures today for implementing the plan of 12 August 2008" (President Medvedev in a press conference following additional discussions with French President Sarkozy, 8 September 2008).

"Of course, peace in the Caucasus is in everyone's interest. But it is simply common sense to recognize that Russia is rooted there by common geography and centuries of history. Russia is not seeking territorial expansion, but it has legitimate interests in the region" (Mikhail Gorbachev, The Washington Post, 12 August 2009).

The South Ossetian Conflict, August 2008*

1 August

The situation deteriorated sharply on the evening of 1 August. The city of Tskhinvali and other settlements came under massive fire from the Georgian side. A battle involving the use of small arms, grenade launchers and mortar fire lasted for several hours in the conflict zone. The first fatalities and significant damage occurred. South Ossetia began to evacuate its residents into North Ossetia. In the first two days after the bombardment, 2,500 residents abandoned their homes.

2 August

On a visit to South Ossetia on 2 August, the Georgian State Minister for Reintegration Temur Yakobashvili announced that Georgian authorities saw no alternative to direct negotiations between Tbilisi and Tskhinvali, and were ready to open the negotiations without any preconditions. The announcement followed a number of meetings with representatives of the OSCE observers' missions, the chief of staff of the peacekeeping operation of the Georgian Ministry of Defence, General Mamuka Kurashvili, and with the commander of the Combined Peacekeeping Forces (CPF) and General of the Russian Army, Marat Kulakhmetov. Mr. Yakobashvili promised that the Georgian authorities would take all measures to ensure a political settlement of the situation.

3 August

On 3 August, the Georgian side continued to send troops toward the border of South Ossetia. An artillery column comprised of one battalion of D-30 artillery complexes and two mortar batteries, which represent an integral part of the Fourth Mechanised Infantry of the Georgian Ministry of Defence, moved towards Tskhinvali from the direction of the Georgian military base in Gori. As a result of Georgian military activity, the Russian Foreign Ministry announced that the threat of large-scale hostilities between Georgia and South Ossetia was becoming increasingly real.

6 August

In the early morning of 6 August, eight jet planes flew over the conflict zone from the direction of Gori. Georgia continued secretly concentrating artillery systems and rocket launchers near the South Ossetian border. At the beginning of the large-scale military operation against Tskhinvali, Georgia had assembled an invading force of up to 12,000 men. Later that day, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Special Ambassador for South Ossetia Yuri F. Popov flew to the region. His efforts laid the groundwork for a meeting in Tskhinvali between Mr. Yakobashvili and the Deputy Prime Minister of South Ossetia, Boris Chochiyev. This meeting, however, was aborted in light of the bombardments of Tskhinvali and other settlements that resumed on 7 August.

7 August

The prospects of organising a trilateral meeting were once again discussed at a meeting between Mr. Popov and Mr. Yakobashvili, which was held in Tbilisi on 7 August. Afterwards, the meeting's participants left separately for South Ossetia. After meeting residents of Georgian villages, Mr. Yakobashvili returned to Tbilisi, while Mr. Popov remained on the ground with the Combined Peacekeepers' Staff.

In the meantime, Georgia stationed 27 "grad" installations near Gori. An entire column of military equipment was moved in the direction of South Ossetia. Twenty trucks with soldiers, 20 Toyota jeeps armed with mounted machine-guns, three armored infantry fighting vehicles, three salvo fire installations and three field artillery guns were moved from Kutaisi to Gori.

During the afternoon of 7 August, Tskhinvali and its surroundings sustained large-calibre artillery fire coming from the direction of the Georgian villages of Nikozi and Ergneti.

At 15:45 on 7 August, military observers from Georgia left the Combined Peacekeepers' Staff and their observation posts. That same evening, Mr. Yakobashvili declared that the Georgian side was temporarily and unilaterally ceasing fire in the conflict zone. According to Mr. Yakobashvili the Georgian side wished to demonstrate to the Tskhinvali authorities "the complete insanity of armed confrontation." Mr. Yakobashvili announced that he intended to go to the conflict zone together with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Special Ambassador Yuri Popov to try and sit down at the negotiating table.

At 19:40 of 7 August, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili addressed the people of Georgia. He declared that on that evening, he had issued an order to all Georgian armed units not to open return fire in the Tskhinvali region conflict zone. "I would like to address those who are now shooting at Georgian policemen. I want to say with full responsibility that several hours ago, I reached a very difficult decision – not to respond with fire," the Georgian President emphasised.

At 22:35 on 7 August, in other words three hours after Mr. Saakashvili's statement, Georgia launched an offensive against South Ossetia.

"On 7 August, Georgia began an artillery campaign against the city of Tskhinvali, which is the capital of the independent, but unrecognized, republic of South Ossetia, which happens to be located inside Georgia's borders" (Center for American Progress, 20 August 2008).

At 23:15 the first fighting and bombardments involving grenade launchers and mortar fire began.

At 23:45 the first salvo mortar fire began.

At 00:20 on 8 August, the cannon artillery joined in.

At 01:20 on 8 August, against the backdrop of roaring gunfire, the movement of Georgian forces toward the eastern part of Tskhinvali began.

"It was clear to me that the attack was completely indiscriminate and disproportionate to any, if indeed there had been any, provocation. The attack was clearly, in my mind, an indiscriminate attack on the town, as a town." (Ryan Grist, senior OSCE representative in Georgia at the time of the conflict, quoted about Georgia's aggression in The New York Times, 6 November 2008).

8 August

On the night of 7-8 August, the commander of the peacekeeping operations at the Joint Staff of the Georgian Ministry of Defence, General Kurashvili, told Rustavi-2 television station that the Georgian side had reached a decision to restore constitutional order in the conflict zone.

In the morning of 8 August, Georgia's air force delivered a strike against South Ossetia. Five Su-25 ground-attack aircraft delivered their bomb loads in the vicinity of the settlement of Tkverneti. Moreover, a column with humanitarian assistance for South Ossetia sustained a bombing attack.

Also that morning, Mr. Yakobashvili declared that Tskhinvali was "almost surrounded by Georgian units. But we do not want to inflict damages and casualties, and for this reason, we are once again extending an offer to the separatist leaders to assume direct negotiations concerning a halt to the fire and a de-escalation of the situation in the conflict zone".

As a result of the nighttime bombardment from the Georgian side, a number of buildings on the territory of the staff of Russian peacekeepers in Tskhinvali were damaged. The parliament building of the Republic of South Ossetia was burned down, a government-building complex was destroyed, and high-rise residential buildings and other structure in the center of the city caught fire. A column of Georgian tanks and infantry forces closed in on Tskhinvali.

By midday on 8 August, Georgian forces, despite resistance from South Ossetian units, took Tskhinvali and eight South Ossetian villages under their control.

In connection with the emergence of reports that Russian peacekeepers were targeted in the Georgian attack, the Georgian Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs E. Zguladze declared at a briefing in Tbilisi that the Georgian forces were taking "every measure to protect peacekeepers from coming under fire." The commander of the Combined Peacekeeping Forces (CPF) in the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict, Mr. Kulakhmetov, considered this a blatant lie and an attempt by the Georgian side to deceive world opinion. Fifteen Russian peacekeepers died while fulfilling their duty.

Amid on-going direct threats to the lives of Russian citizens and peacekeepers in South Ossetia and in accordance with the right to self-defence, on the afternoon of August 8, Russia sent additional forces to South Ossetia to support Russian peacekeepers and protect civilians.

At 3 p.m. Russian President Medvedev issued a statement on the South Ossetian situation and emphasized that in line with the Constitution and federal legislation, he was obliged as Russia's president to defend the lives and dignity of Russian citizens regardless of their place of residence. Under these circumstances, he stated that Russia had to launch an operation to obtain peace, and protect its citizens in South Ossetia.

More than 1,500 residents and 18 Russian servicemen were killed during the four days of tragic events. Several thousand people suffered injuries, including 52 Russian servicemen. More than 30,000 refugees fled the Republic of South Ossetia.

9 August

Russian troops unblock the road from the village of Zara leading to Tskhinvali from the North. However, as South Ossetian refugees, accompanied by Russian reinforcement units of peacekeeping forces, moved along the Zara Road, Georgian artillery opened fire.

Martial law is declared in Georgia.

10 August

On 10 August, Georgian units prevented the Red Cross from conducting an evacuation by firing on convoys carrying the wounded.

Russian warships patrolling the coast of the Republic of Abkhazia were attacked by four Georgian guided missile boats. The Russians responded and as a result of quick naval combat, the Georgians retreated.

Humanitarian corridors for the withdrawal of refugees from South Ossetia were opened and by an agreement of the two sides, a northern path (for Ossetian refugees and wounded) and a southern one (for Georgians) were provided.

11 August

On 11 August, President Medvedev met with Defense Ministry Anatoly Serdyukov and said that Russia had largely completed its peacekeeping operation regarding Georgia in South Ossetia.

A settlement plan by French President Nicolas Sarkozy is presented to President Medvedev.

12 August

Presidents Medvedev and Sarkozy negotiate terms to resolve the Georgia, South Ossetia and Abkhazia conflicts and agree to the following six principles:

1. Do not resort to the use of force.
2. The absolute cessation of all hostilities.
3. Free access to humanitarian assistance.
4. The Armed Forces of Georgia must withdraw to their permanent positions.
5. The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation must withdraw to the line where they were stationed prior to the beginning of hostilities. Prior to the establishment of international mechanisms the Russian peacekeeping forces will take additional security measures.
6. An international debate on the future status of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and ways to ensure their lasting security will take place.

Upon agreement with Moscow, the French President traveled to Tbilisi to share the principles with Georgia.

The Georgian authorities agreed to sign the treaty, but deleted the mention of the status from the sixth principle and offered to discuss security issues only.

"I think that these are good principles to resolve this problem and go beyond the dramatic situation that arose... If the Georgian side is truly ready to sign them, really does withdraw its troops to their initial positions, and fulfills these principles, then the process to normalizing the situation in South Ossetia will have begun" (President Medvedev in a press statement following negotiations with French President Sarkozy, 12 August 2008).

15 August

Georgian armed forces continued assembling troops in the Tbilisi area. Sabotage and reconnaissance groups and snipers continued operations on South Ossetian territory.

18 August

South Ossetia objected to the presence of international observers and requested that Russia deploy a military base. Georgian armed forces continued carrying out measures to restore combat power and prepare defenses, and coordinated sabotage and terrorist activities on South Ossetian territory.

21 August

Abkhazia and South Ossetia presidents and parliaments appeal to Russia to recognize their independence from Georgia.

26 August

Based on appeals to Russia from South Ossetia and Abkhazia presidents, Russia agrees to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

"Considering the freely expressed will of the Ossetian and Abkhaz peoples and being guided by the provisions of the UN Charter, the 1970 Declaration on the Principles of International Law Governing Friendly Relations Between States, the CSCE Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and other fundamental international instruments, I signed Decrees on the recognition by the Russian Federation of South Ossetia's and Abkhazia's independence. Russia calls on other states to follow its example. This is not an easy choice to make, but it represents the only possibility to save human lives" (President Medvedev in a press statement concerning his decision to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, 26 August 2008).

*"Commentary in the U.S. media, almost without exception, has turned a longstanding, complex separatist conflict into a *casus belli* for a new cold war with Russia, ignoring not only the historical and political reasons for South Ossetia's drive for independence from Georgia but also the responsibility of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili for the current crisis" (Katrina Vanden Heuvel, The Nation, 18 August 2008).*

**The information detailed in this timeline was obtained through various public resources, including the Kremlin Web site (www.Kremlin.ru), the Russian Defence Ministry, news outlets (i.e. Associated Press, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Nation), and independent organizations (i.e. Center for American Progress, Amnesty International).*

After the South Ossetia Conflict

Perspectives from Russia;
What Human Rights and European Reports are Saying



Georgia Relations

"We stopped the aggressor, defended people's lives, and prevented a humanitarian catastrophe. But we understand very well that in order to prevent similar events in the future, we need decisive, consolidated efforts from the entire international community, efforts to develop new, truly reliable approaches to ensuring international security." (President Medvedev in his speech at the Gala Evening Celebrating Defenders of the Motherland Day, 21 February 2009)

"To be quite frank with you, the Georgian leadership bears full responsibility for everything that happened... When I became President of the Russian Federation, I met with Mr. Saakashvili and said to him that we are ready to help restore Georgia's territorial integrity, but that Georgia would have to take the right line of behavior, because, I think you all realize that military action never helps to make a country stronger... We would like to have good and friendly relations with Georgia... We have much love and appreciation for the Georgian people... If democratic processes bring new people to power in Georgia, we are ready to discuss all subjects." (President Medvedev in his speech to the London School of Economics, 2 April 2009)

Monitoring Missions

"Russia is not against the OSCE presence in the region... We support this presence, but on the conditions acceptable for all sides involved in the conflict. I mean the creation of two administrations present in Georgia and South Ossetia." (Vladimir Chizhov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the European Communities, 18 May 2009)

"In fact, Russia has done all it could to pragmatically resolve the issues surrounding the continuation of the UN and OSCE activities in the region, to which we attach special significance as a factor for improving regional stability and security." (Andrei Nesterenko, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson, 10 July 2009)

"The importance of Caucasus 2009 is determined by the fact that the maintenance of the proper readiness of Russian armed forces in the region serves objectively as a major restraining and stabilizing factor that prevents any new flare-ups of violence there." (Andrei Nesterenko, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson, weekly briefing, 14 July 2009, discussing Russian strategic military exercises from 29 June and 6 July, 2009)

Medvedev's Recent Visit to South Ossetia

"I am really grateful to be invited to visit your newly born nation, your new state – South Ossetia – which emerged as a result of difficult and dramatic events, and which was indeed supported by the Russian people in the hardest moments. I feel that today's first brief working visit by the President of the Russian Federation will lay the foundation for our future contacts and for our friendship. Our nations not only share a great common history, but have also developed a solid regulatory framework for a common future. I am referring to several treaties between the Russian Federation and South Ossetia. We have launched a number of projects aimed to

restore the economy and social services of your republic, and we will certainly progress with their implementation as there is still a great deal to be done. And you should show me where your greatest priorities lie for our efforts to be focused there.” (President Medvedev, 13 July 2009, in Tskhinvali before meeting with South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoity)

“We paid our first visit to a new state that was created nearly a year ago. That happened after the totally savage aggression that had been unleashed by the Georgian regime... It is not our task to sort it out, at some point the Georgian people will pass a verdict on the Saakashvili regime... Our task is to help the young state get up to its feet, overcome its difficulties, simply survive in the fairly difficult environment that exists in the Caucasus.” (President Medvedev, 14 July 2009)

Relations with South Ossetia and Abkhazia

“We take seriously and responsibly our obligations within the international community. If we recognize a state, and if we thus create a new entity of the international law, then of course we will never reconsider such a decision. But that does not mean that we do not want to discuss the situation... We are ready to do that.” (President Medvedev in his speech at the Council on Foreign Relations, 15 November 2008)

“The decision to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia was not easy for Russia. For 16 years Russia had been honestly fulfilling its peacekeeping commitments and settling regional conflicts. Yet the taboo on the use of force was breached in August 2008. The attempts of Tbilisi to shift the blame to Moscow are the sources of danger... The accusations were unfounded, but the after-taste lingered... We accentuated the need for the soonest signing of non-aggression agreements between Georgia and South Ossetia and between Georgia and Abkhazia. This is the only way to agree that the events of last August will never happen again.” (Grigory Karasin, State Secretary – Deputy Foreign Minister, in a press conference in Geneva, 19 May 2009)

“Russia is determined to ensure security of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and that is proven by the joint border protection agreements signed on April 30. That would promote security and stability of the entire region...” (Grigory Karasin, State Secretary – Deputy Foreign Minister in a press conference in Geneva, 19 May 2009)

“There is the issue of the missions in the Caucasus. Indeed, this encountered difficulties, because neither South Ossetia nor Abkhazia wants the missions to formerly refer to them as they were prior to the proclamation of their independence. But in fact, no one objected to the missions themselves. The missions are useful and necessary... But if you talk about the mandate and the United Nations mission, it seems to me that it must take into account realities... including with regard to name changes. That is why we were forced to veto a decision. If the approach becomes more pragmatic, of course we will remove our veto and agree on everything.” (President Medvedev in a news conference following the G8-Summit in Italy, 12 July 2009)

Agreements with South Ossetia and Abkhazia

“I am confident that these documents will make a clear contribution to strengthening security in the Caucasus... While defending the borders of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, we are of course aspiring to achieve the most important goal, the same we have always had: to ensure long-awaited peace in the region. For a long time now people there have grown tired of living in constant fear and in anticipation of attacks, although we must of course say that after the decisions that Russia took the situation has radically changed... People must be granted peaceful life.” (President Medvedev in his speech at the Ceremony for Signing Bilateral Documents between the Russian Federation, the Republic of Abkhazia and the Republic of South Ossetia, 30 April 2009)

"The documents signed in Moscow today with Abkhazia and South Ossetia on joint efforts to guard their state borders, they are designed to strengthen security and stability in the region. These deals cannot impede the search of acceptable international peace formats currently in place." (Andrei Nesterenko, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson, as quoted by States News Service, 30 April 2009)

Medvedev-Sarkozy Plan

"The Medvedev-Sarkozy, which, by the way, is not being implemented above all by Georgia itself not wanting to withdraw its troops and weapons, and throughout the last few months, building up its military presence in the zones directly adjoining Abkhazia and South Ossetia." (Andrei Nesterenko, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson, as quoted by States News Service, 30 April 2009)

"Has been successfully implemented in the part concerning Russia... If questions arise regarding its fulfillment, they should be referred to the Georgian side... Thus one of the clauses envisages the pullout of the Georgian forces to their permanent base, but instead we observe concentration of the forces in the areas adjoining South Ossetia." (Vladimir Chizhov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the European Communities, 18 May 2009)

"I think the plan has proven its worthy and helped calm down passions. It is a different question that the plan has a number of provisions that require further cooperation, and we will do that." (President Medvedev as quoted by ITAR-TASS World Service, 10 July 2009)

"I think the plan has worked quite well and, to a large extent, accomplished its purpose, which was to calm the situation. Another point is that there are a number of aspects on which we must continue to cooperate. We will do so." (President Medvedev in a news conference following the G8-Summit in Italy, 12 July 2009)

Official Reports Regarding the South Ossetia Conflict

Amnesty International Report (November 2008):

Report available at: http://www.amnesty.org.uk/uploads/documents/doc_18989.pdf

Eyewitness accounts related to Amnesty International suggest that the bulk of the destruction in Tskhinvali occurred during the initial shelling of Tskhinvali by Georgian forces on night of 7 August (pg. 27).

Amnesty International was widely informed by Georgians displaced from South Ossetia that Russian soldiers had, on the whole, conducted themselves in a more disciplined and orderly fashion with regard to Georgian civilians (pg. 31).

Amnesty International is concerned that Georgian forces do not appear to have adopted necessary precautionary measures to protect civilians in their 7 August assault on Tskhinvali, using weapons known for their limited accuracy to attack areas with concentrations of civilians and civilian objects (pg.60).

House of Commons Defence Committee, UK Report (10 July 2009):

Report is available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmselect/cmdefence/276/27602.htm>

According to the report, a Financial Times article (12 August 2008) described the Georgian decision as a "spectacularly ill-conceived military adventure" given the Georgian's inability to block Russian reinforcements coming through the Roki tunnel.

The report commented that President Saakashvili's decision to launch an offensive on 7 August was politically reckless and that Russia acted swiftly to remove Georgian forces from South Ossetia. Also, the Human Rights Watch's investigation found that Georgian forces failed in their responsibility to minimize civilian casualties in the Tskhinvali area, particularly in the "indiscriminate" shelling of Tskhinvali (pg. 35).

Russia wanted the OSCE to agree to establish separate missions in Tbilisi and Tskhinvali under separate commands, a proposal that was unacceptable to Georgia as it would have recognized the independence of the territory (pg. 39).